

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 DAMASC 06366 211516Z

65

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SSM-03 SAM-01 ACDA-07 OMB-01 AID-05 TRSE-00 /093 W

----- 119873

P R 211415Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9667

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DAMASCUS 6366

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 21 SYRIAN MEDIA STRESS PREPARATIONS
FOR SARKIS ASSUMPTION OF POWER

1. SYRIAN MEDIA STRESSED PREPARATIONS FOR SARKIS ASSUMPTION
OF PRESIDENCY, CONTINUED FIGHTING IN LEBANON AND ASAD
MEETINGS WITH SAEB SALAM AND KAMAL ADHAM. PRESS HEADLINED:
"LEBANON WITNESSES POLITICAL CONTACTS PAVING WAY FOR SARKIS'
ASSUMPTION OF HIS DUTIES. PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU IN SESSION
IN PREPARATION FOR CONSTITUTIONAL OATH SESSION. CONTACTS
CONTINUE IN DAMASCUS. FIERCE FIGHTING IN LEBANON PRECEDES
OATH SESSION. LEBANESE POLITICAL CIRCLES SAY -- 'SYRIA'S
SINCERE AND PERSISTENT EFFORTS, AND AWARENESS OF OUR
LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, ARE BOUND TO RESCUE LEBANON
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DAMASC 06366 211516Z

FROM ITS ORDEAL.'" PRESS NOTED STATEMENT BY GHASSAN

TWEINI EMPHASIZING MINISTER'S CONVICTION THAT TRANSITION OF POWER TO SARKIS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. MEDIA REITERATED ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLANS FOR QUADRIPARTITE SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN-LEBANESE-ARAB LEAGUE MEETING SEPT. 24.

2. ACCORDING TO MEDIA, FIGHTING FLARED UP PREVIOUS DAY ON ALL BEIRUT FRONTS, PARTICULARLY DAMASCUS ROAD AND COMMERCIAL DISTRICT. FIERCE BATTLE RAGED IN MUSEUM AREA, AND FIRES BLAZED IN HADITH AND TARSHIHA QUARTERS. ARTILLERY DUELS CONTINUED IN NORTH METN WHILE CLASHES RESUMED AROUND ZGHORTA.

3. MEDIA REPORTED MEETING AFTERNOON SEPT. 20 BETWEEN PRES. ASAD AND SHEIKH KAMAL ADHAM IN WHICH SAUDI DELIVERED MESSAGE TO ASAD FROM KING KHALID. LATER SAME EVENING ASAD RECEIVED SAEB SALAM TO DISCUSS SITUATION IN LEBANON AND CURRENT EFFORTS AIMED AT SETTLING CRISIS.

4. PRESS GAVE FULL COVERAGE TO STATEMENT BY DEP. NAJAH WAKIM LAUDING ATTEMPTS BY SYRIA AND SARKIS TO END CIVIL WAR. WAKIM DENIED RUMORS OF DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN HIMSELF AND NASSERITE ORGANIZATION LED BY KAMAL SHATILA. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT ALL ARABS WOULD DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THOSE WHO TRYING TO RESCUE LEBANON AND SAFEGUARD PALESTINIAN CAUSE AND THOSE WHO HAVE RELIED ON "SADATI AND INTERNATIONAL PROMISES." HE AFFIRMED THAT CONSTITUTIONAL OATH SESSION WOULD TAK PLACE, AND ASSERTED IT COULD BE HELD ANYWHERE IN LEBANON. HE CONCLUDED WITH APPEAL TO ARABS TO CLOSE RANKS AND CONFRONT IMPERIALIST-ZIONIST SCHEMES.

5. PRESS COLUMNIST WARNED AGAINST PARTIES WHICH DESIRE SARKIS TO BEGIN HIS TERM FROM POSITION OF WEAKNESS RATHER THAN STRENGTH SO THAT THEY MAY IMPOSE THEIR CONDITIONS ON HIS ADMINISTRATION. ANOTHER WRITER REAFFIRMED THAT SYRIA WOULD NOT HESITATE TO TAKE "DECISIVE STANDS" TO THWART PLOT AGAINST LEBANON. THIRD REMINDED READERS THAT "LEAVING CRISIS WITHOUT SOLUTION WILL NOT LEAD TO ANY SOLUTION, AND PROLONGING CRISIS WILL NOT LEAD TO RESOLUTION OF CRISIS." FOURTH WRITER OPINED THAT CONTINUATION OF CRISIS THREATENED TO SABOTAGE EFFORTS TO SETTLE MAJOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 DAMASC 06366 211516Z

REGIONAL PROBLEMS INVOLVING COMPLETE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND RECOGNITION OF LEGITIMATE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS.

6. COMMENT: REPORTS OF CONTINUED FIGHTING IN BEIRUT, ESPECIALLY IN MUSEUM AREA, AMIDST REFERENCES TO PREPARATIONS FOR SARKIS OATH CEREMONY INDICATE UNDERLYING CURRENT OF ANXIETY IN DAMASCUS THAT LAST-MINUTE EVENTS MAY UPSET TRANSITION TO SARKIS. WAKIM'S ASSERTION THAT CEREMONY

COULD TAKE PLACE ANYWHERE IN LEBANON SEEMS DESIGNED TO
PUBLICIZE FALLBACK POSITION IN CASE CLASHES IN BEIRUT
PROHIBIT PARLIAMENTARY GATHERING THERE.
MURPHY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC06366
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760356-0643
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760938/aaaabgng.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2004 by MartinML>; APPROVED <10 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SEPTEMBER 21 SYRIAN MEDIA STRESS PREPARATIONS FOR SARKIS ASSUMPTION OF POWER
TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, (SARKIS, ELIAS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006